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ABSTRACT

The "Goldfinch" is a magazine that introduces young children to different aspects of Iowa history. Each issue contains articles to provide in-depth knowledge about Iowa. The theme of this issue is searching through historical sources, such as letters, diaries, manuscripts, newspapers, clothing, old buildings, time capsules, statistics, and photographs. The articles include: (1) "Digging for History"; (2) "Buried Treasure!"; (3) "Iowa's Biggest Time Capsule; (4) "A New Century in the News"; (5) "A Piece of History? or a 'Goldfinch' Mystery"; and (6) "Making History on a Family Farm." Activities include: (1) "Create Your Own Time Capsule!"; and (2) "How Can Math Help Me Learn about History?" A cookie recipe taken from a student's great-great-great grandmother's recipe book concludes the issue. (BT)

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A Treasure Hunt Through History.

The Goldfinch
Iowa History for Young People
Volume 21, Number 2
Winter 1999/2000

SO 031 550

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THE Goldfinch

Iowa History for Young People Volume 21, Number 2 • Winter 1999/2000 • $3

A Treasure Hunt Through History

A Treasure Hunt Through History!

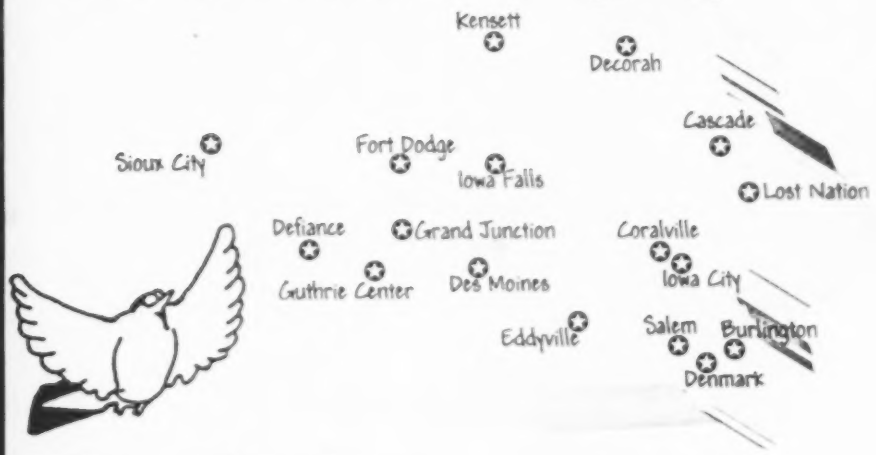
Goldie: Wild Rosie, we need to get our tools together for this adventure! We'll need a shovel, a flashlight, maybe a metal detector... Oh, and we'll need a super secret treasure map that shows us exactly where to dig...

Wild Rosie: What are you talking about, Goldie? Shovels? Maps?

Goldie: This issue of *The Goldfinch* is taking us on a treasure hunt, right? How can we find the treasure without the right-tools?

Wild Rosie: Hang on to your tail feathers, Goldie. I think you may have misunderstood...

Goldie: Gold! Silver! Jewels! We'll be rich!



Dear Readers,

Join Wild Rosie and Goldie as they dig through Iowa history in search of buried treasure. The Iowa map on this page shows some of the places we'll visit. Rosie is right—it's a different kind of treasure you'll be seeking. This issue of *The Goldfinch* will be the "map" to help you begin your search. Start digging!

--The Editor

THE Goldfinch

Volume 21, Number 2 • Winter 1999/2000

Educational Press Association of America Member

Winner of a 1998 Parents' Choice Silver Honor Award

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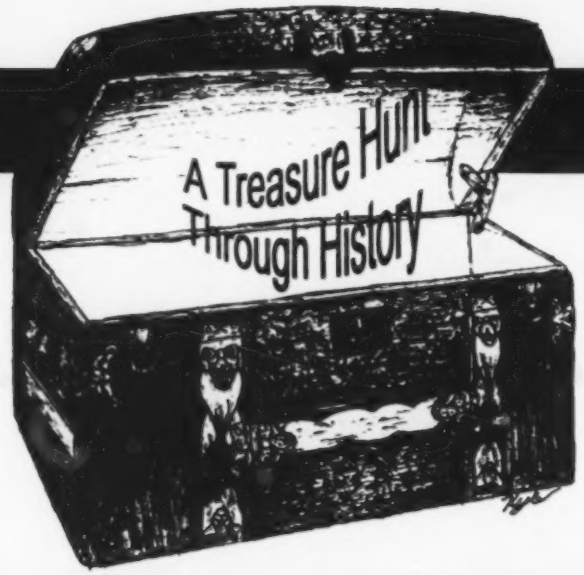

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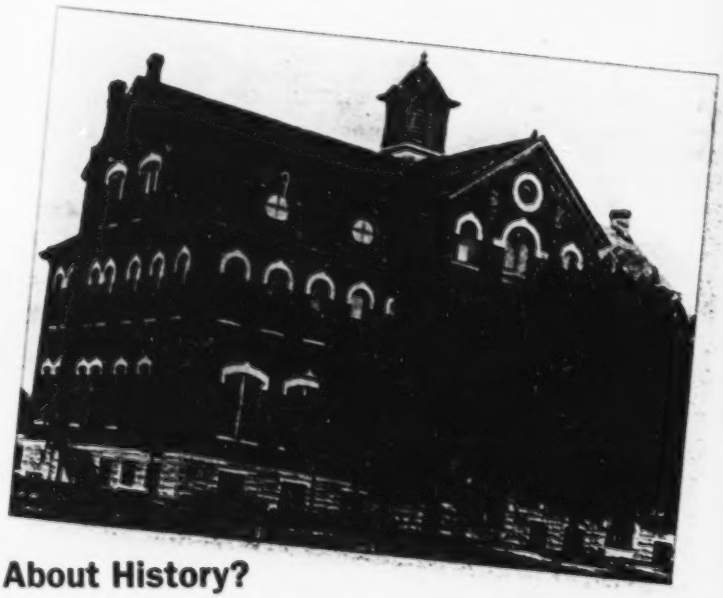
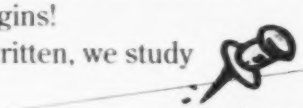


Digging for History

Not all treasure hunts involve digging for buried chests bursting with silver, gold, and glittering jewels. This issue of *The Goldfinch* is going to take you on a treasure hunt—but not exactly the type Goldie imagined.

Our treasure hunt begins as we sift through historical sources. In fact, that's where every issue of *The Goldfinch* begins!

Before stories are written, we study letters, diaries, manuscripts, newspapers, and photographs to find out as much as we can about our topic. These sources are known as primary sources. They document the people and events of history first hand. Recordings of radio and television news broadcasts are also considered primary sources. So are interviews with people (famous or not) who participated in or witnessed events in the past.



Did you know?

The first issue of *The Goldfinch* was published 25 years ago. It included stories about the Amish in Iowa. Students wrote many of the articles.

Historians study primary sources to learn everything they can about a subject. They interpret what they've discovered and write books or articles to communicate what they've learned. Those books and articles are "secondary sources" because they are written by people who were not directly involved in the events they studied.

History isn't just for scholars. Everyone has a history to learn about and pass on. Anyone who is eager to learn about what life was like in another time can study history. Do your grandparents tell stories about when they were kids? Learning more about what was going on in their town, state, nation, and the world at the time might help those stories make more sense to you. It will help you find your place in history.

But wait a minute—this doesn't sound much like a treasure hunt. It sounds like work! It *is* work—but so is digging deep holes in the ground in hopes of discovering a buried fortune. When you dig through history, each discovery is like finding a nugget of gold. You may be looking for something specific, but instead stumble over an interesting story, fact, or clue you never expected. For example, *The Goldfinch* paged through 100-year-old newspapers to see what Iowans thought, experienced, and predicted as the year 1899 turned into 1900. Along the way we uncovered a story that raised more questions than it answered. Read more about this *Goldfinch* mystery starting on page 22!

Where do you begin your quest for clues to solve your own history mysteries?

Historians find primary sources in archives. An archive is a place where collections of historical documents are preserved for study. Most of the photographs and other items featured in *The Goldfinch* are kept in the archives of the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) at buildings located in Iowa City and Des Moines. Anyone

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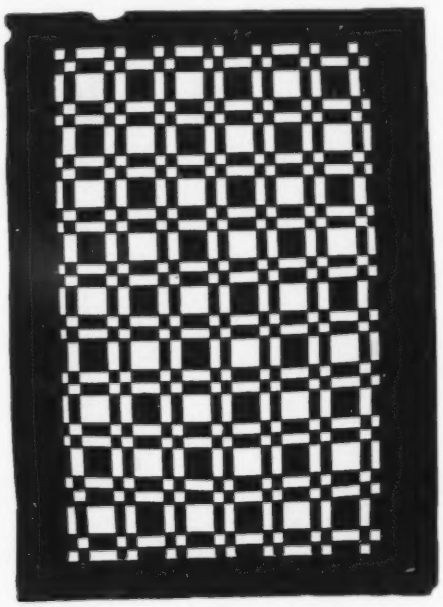
conducting historical research can use SHSI collections. Photographs, documents, diaries, and other papers are kept in special acid-free envelopes and boxes. When handling some of the items, you'll have to wear white cotton gloves to prevent oils from your skin from damaging fragile, often one-of-a-kind materials.

Where else can you find history? Historical sources may be as close as your basement, in an old dresser filled with family photographs and papers. You might find history in a bundle of letters in a trunk in the attic. There could be history in your great-grandmother's recipe file. How about in your desk or locker at school? It might take an archeologist to dig through the contents, but would you find history?

In the late 19th century, paper made of wood pulp, which is highly acidic, came into common use. Over time, the acid eats away the pulp, causing documents to discolor and crumble. Storing items in **acid-free** containers helps preserve them.

The items shown below are from a student workbook preserved in a collection at the SHSI archive in Iowa City. Lora Ankeny was in kindergarten, probably in 1900, when she did this embroidery on paper (right). She wove the pattern on the left with narrow strips of paper. Did you do the same type of activities when you were in kindergarten? Did you save any of your kindergarten work? If someone 100 years from now looked at artifacts from your grade school years, what would they learn about you?



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Digging for History in What You Wear!

You might find history in clothing. Look at the following photographs taken in the late 1800s and early 1900s of kids in Iowa. What things do these photographs have in common?

One thing you probably noticed is that all of the children are wearing dresses. But when you read the captions, you will also notice that some of the children are boys. Boys wearing dresses? Why do you think boys and girls from this period were dressed so much alike?

The garments were loose fitting for comfort and so children wouldn't outgrow them so quickly. They were made of durable, easy-care fabrics and could be handed down for younger brothers and sisters to wear. Making clothes that could be worn by both boys and girls saved time and money. Dresses also made changing a baby's diaper easier!

These photos of unidentified children come from the Nels L. Roslien Collection, SHSI, Iowa City. Roslien was a bachelor farmer and amateur photographer. His images portray rural life around Kensett, Iowa, from about 1905 to 1915.

John on a rocking horse, Iowa Falls, ca. 1898. From the Foster Collection, SHSI, Iowa City.

Titled "No Milk For Supper," this photo from the Foster Collection was taken about 1896 in Iowa Falls.

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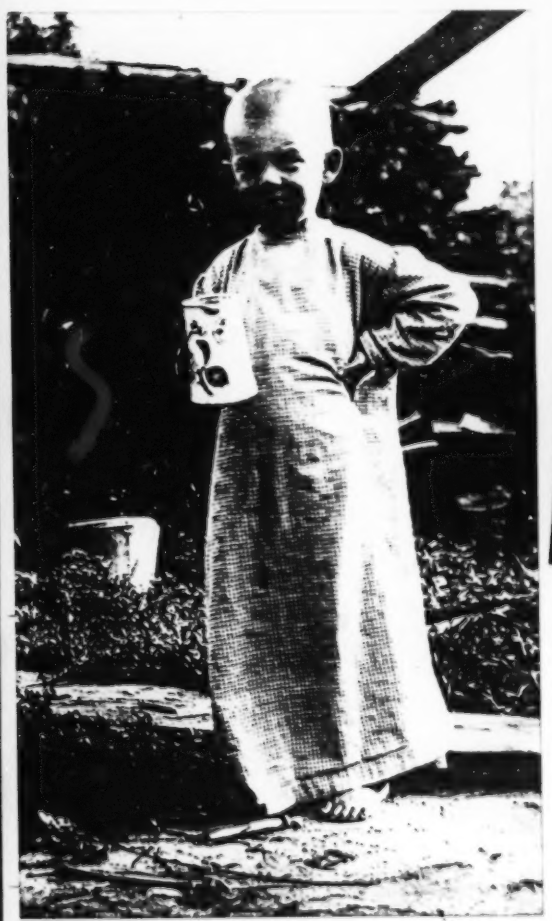
Try this!

Have someone take pictures of you and some of your friends wearing your favorite clothes. Then ask your parents, grandparents, and older brothers and sisters (and anyone else who is willing to help out) to find photographs of themselves when they were your age. Make color photocopies of the photos, making sure to note the date the photo was taken and who is in the shot.

Now it's time to analyze your data. Did girls and boys dress similarly or differently in your parents' generation? How about in your generation? What differences and similarities do you notice in clothing styles across the years you've explored? Are there certain styles and colors that go out of style and return in later generations? Can you identify any events in history that affected clothing styles? These are just a few questions to get you started. The more you dig, the more you'll discover!

The Goldfinch can't wait to hear about the treasures you find! Write to us at 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240-1806.



The young girl in this photo, also from the Roslien Collection, is pulling a string to release the camera shutter.

Playing with a tree swing and a wagon, these two young boys were photographed ca. 1900.

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Digging for History in Diaries

Diaries offer historians another way to dig into the past. The following excerpts come from a diary kept by Maggie Lathrop in 1872.

Sat. Feb. 24 I was taken sick with the Diptheria. George Hand came over today. He said he was sorry to see me sick. He can play splendid on the fiddle. The doctor came over about eight o'clock and I had to take some little pills.

Mon. Feb. 26 I am invited up to Mr. Miller's to a party, but I expect I can't go for I am sick. It is going to be on the first of March, my birthday.

Fri. Mar. 1 I was fifteen years old today; did not get any presents. Mother says I can't go to the party for it is so damp. Fred [Maggie's brother] is going.

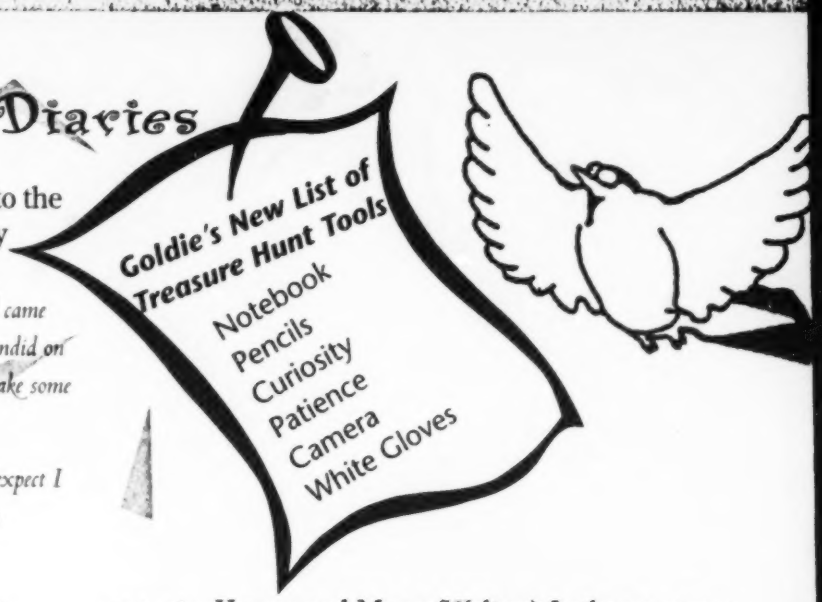
Thurs. May 2 I was down to Angie's [Maggie's friend] today. Mrs. Hill has had [a visit from] Dr. Boucher. I do hope she will get well now....

Fri. May 3 ...O what a bother it is to clean house. I wish houses were made so we would not have to clean them.

Mon. May 20 I came out to the farm today and am nearly sick as it is going to be so awful lonesome out here. Everything is in a hubbub, if I know what that is. I had rather give all I possess than come out here. If Father would only get me a pony I could stay content.

Wed. June 12 Angie was out here today and stayed all day. We had a gay old time once more together. She made me get on her pony.... He is splendid to ride....

Fri. Sept. 27 Today as I was going down to Mrs. Hill's I met Mr. Robinson, and he told me the sad news of Mrs. Hill's death. I met Angie at the door and she said, "O Maggie I haven't any mother now." If anything ever went to my heart those words did....



Maggie was born in Iowa City on March 1, 1857. Her full name was Margaret Adele Lathrop. Her parents, Henry and Mary (Welton) Lathrop, came to Iowa from New York in 1847. Both were teachers. Her father also edited a newspaper and practiced law before becoming a full-time farmer. During school sessions, the Lathrop family lived in the city. They lived on the farm the rest of the year. Maggie married Frank Luse on November 21, 1877. She was very ill at the time, probably with tuberculosis. She died on March 9, 1878.

Maggie's diary offers a glimpse of what life was like for a teenager in Iowa City after the Civil War. She enjoyed spending time with friends and didn't care for house cleaning. (Some things haven't changed much through history!)

Reading Maggie's diary might spark an interest in the history of medical practices in

Maggie was 21 when she died of tuberculosis, one of the leading causes of death at the end of the 19th century. In 1900, the average life expectancy was about 47 years. Now, the average life expectancy is approximately 77 years.

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Iowa. Her diary mentions that the doctor visited Angie's mother in their home. Was this common at that time? Mrs. Hill (and eventually Maggie herself) died at a young age. Why has life expectancy increased over the years? How were common diseases treated in Maggie's lifetime? How are those same diseases treated today? Were there hospitals available for severely ill patients?

What about the social lives of teens in the 1870s? What did they do for fun? The Lathrop farm was less than six miles from town, yet Maggie dreads the isolation of being so far from her friends. How has improved transportation changed our perception of distance? When digging into history, each interesting story you discover leads to many more topics to explore!

Digging for History at Home

Your own community is another great place to hunt for treasure in history. Are there interesting buildings where you can walk through the front doors and enter places where history happened? Can you find old maps or photographs of your community? How has the town changed? Are there areas that haven't changed? *The Goldfinch* asked student advisory board member Emily Johnson to explore history in her home town.

Emily Johnson, 12, digs for history in Fort Dodge.

Everyone is talking about the class of 2000. This year in Fort Dodge, an estimated 320 students will graduate. But did you know that between the years of 1891 and 1898, 43 boys and 80 girls graduated—only 123 total! That gives you a lot to think about. Lots has happened since the century began.

Let's say you want to get a hamburger from McDonald's. How would you get there? Today, most people would go in a car. If you want to see your cousin who lives far away, you could fly in an airplane. In Fort Dodge in the year 1900, horses and buggies were the way to get around. You could hop on a train for longer trips. (But you wouldn't find a McDonald's until after 1953!)

Today, people in Fort Dodge are talking about the soon-to-be-built library. The original one-room library was open one afternoon and evening a week. Then, with a $30,000 gift from Andrew Carnegie, a second library was completed in 1902. The total cost of that library, located on First Avenue North, was $40,000. The new library will be built at the end of the square and is expected to cost around $5.3 million.

My mom reads the **Fort Dodge Messenger** every morning. But at the turn of the century, it was printed twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Fort Dodge has really changed since the turn of the century. Just think how much it will change in the next 100 years!

—*Emily Johnson*

Try This!

After you collect a "trunk full of treasure" (or a notebook filled with fascinating information!) about your community, create a time line by plotting the information in chronological order on a long sheet of paper. A roll of newsprint works well for this. (Art supply stores often sell newsprint, or call your local newspaper office to see if they sell or give away end rolls.) Describe events, festivals, and traditions that are important to your community. Use drawings and photos to help tell the story. Add details from your family history, too.

Maybe you will write history books in the future, or just read about history, digging into topics that interest you as a hobby. Either way, you are part of the rapidly changing world around you. You are part of history. You can't escape it!

GF

chronological: arranged in the order that events happened.

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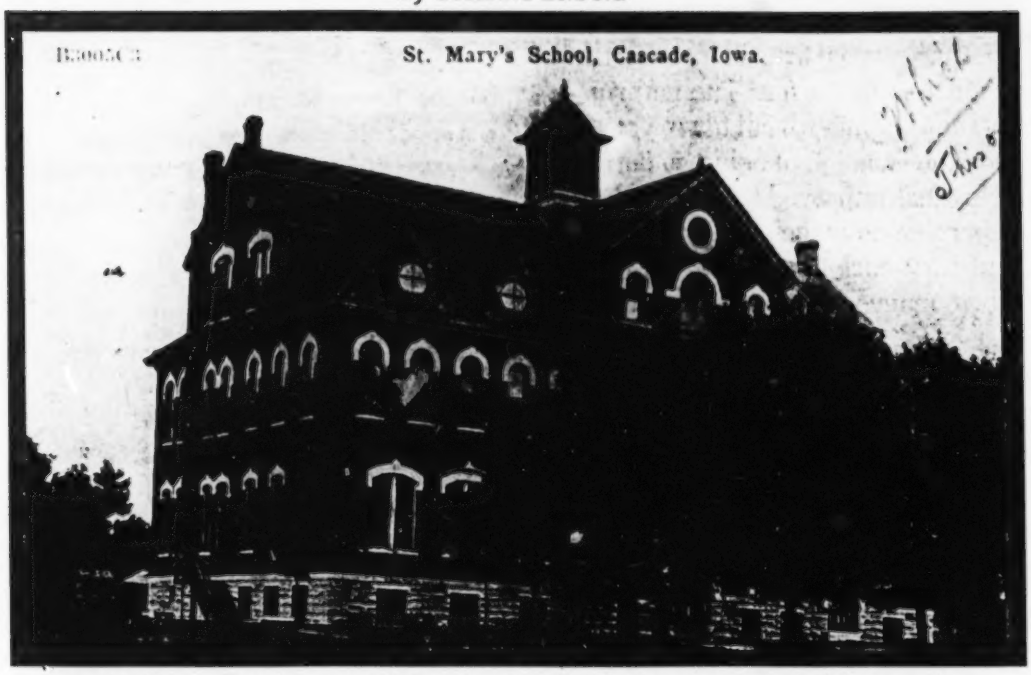
Sometimes history emerges from the rubble...

Buried Treasure!

by Susanne Leibold



Jerry Hoffman stood in awe of St. Mary's School when he attended first grade there. As a high school student, he watched as the building was torn down to make room for a parking lot. Today (more than 24 years later) Hoffman remembers the day he and some friends discovered history in a cornerstone!

Jerry Hoffman watched his old grade school crumble into a tangled pile of wreckage. When the demolition crew left at the end of the day, Hoffman and his friends Wally Knapp and Barney and Leo Otting sifted through the rubble looking for souvenirs.

St. Mary's grade school in Cascade, Iowa, was built in 1894 and torn down in 1975. "We found those old sinks with **bubblers** and pulled them out of the pile," Hoffman told *The Goldfinch*. "We had fun rummaging around the site." Hoffman remembered the rumor that a time capsule was embedded in the cornerstone of the old school. With a hammer and chisel, they chipped away at the cornerstone to find out if the rumor was true. Soon they discovered a

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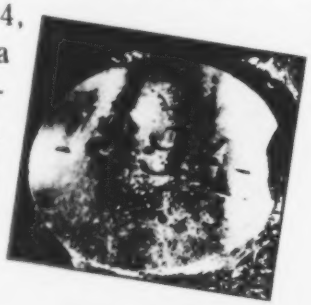
12

bubblers: drinking fountains

PHOTOS: COURTESY FRED M. MEIRS

small metal box. It was stuck in the stone, so the boys asked the demolition foreman for help. He pried the dented box loose. Inside they found several issues of two local newspapers dated 1894, some 19th-century coins, a medal inscribed in German, notes from two men who helped build the school, and a letter written in Latin from the priest serving St. Mary's parish at the time.



Items placed in time capsules commemorate special events such as construction of a new building, a significant anniversary, or the coming of a new century. What is put inside depends on what people think is important enough to be preserved for future generations to see. Time capsules become buried treasures for future generations to uncover.

The time capsule Jerry Hoffman and his friends found offers clues about the people of Cascade who assembled its contents and about the times in which they lived. The headline in one 1894 edition of the *Cascade Pioneer* placed in the time capsule screamed: "Murder! Albert Francois Shot by Joshua Brady." Perhaps that newspaper was selected because it described a major and unusual event in the community. Memories fade over time—maybe those who assembled the time capsule didn't want this story to be lost in history.

One for the future...

In 1998, people in Sioux City, Iowa, celebrated the first birthday of the Sioux City Art Center by putting together a time capsule to be opened in 25 years. Their time capsule is filled with art created by kids. Molly Boyle, a sophomore at Heelan High School in Sioux City made a collage and wrote a letter to herself documenting what she was thinking and feeling as a freshman in high school. "It will be fun to read it again in 25 years to see what I found interesting and important," Boyle said.

Adults were invited to submit items, too. Some contributed copies of their wills or family pictures. Others put in lyrics to their favorite songs or pictures of pets.

A time capsule craze has cropped up all over the world this year as people anticipate the dawn of a new millennium. Most time capsules today are made of more sophisticated materials than the old metal box hidden in St. Mary's in 1894. Waterproof, airtight containers are best for long term preservation. If you were to put together a time capsule for future generations to uncover, what would you put in it?

GF

PHOTO: COURTESY SIOUX CITY ART CENTER

The Sioux City Art Center time capsule will be opened in 2023.

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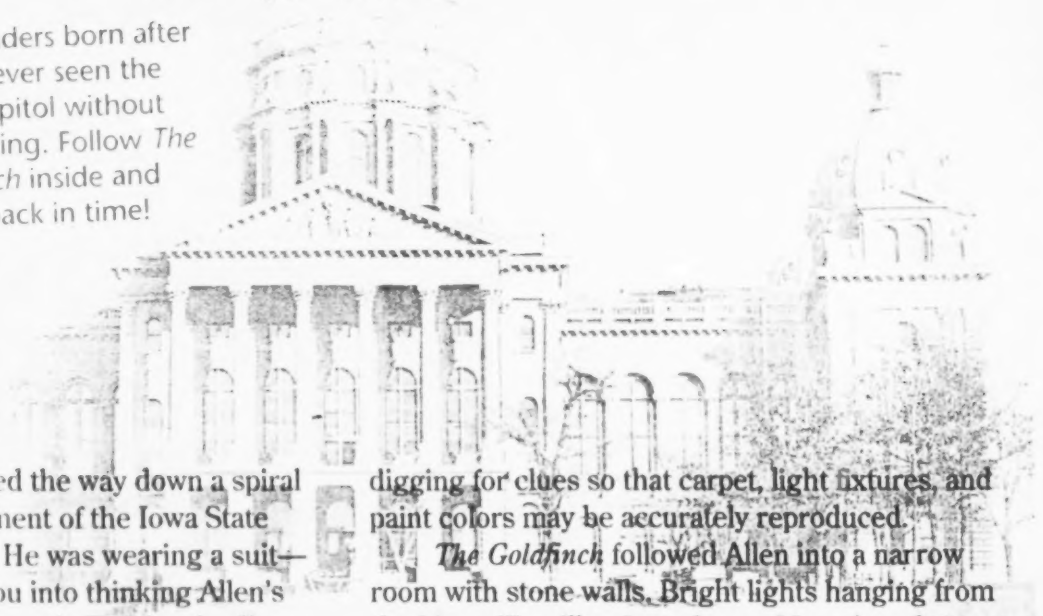
Iowa's Biggest Time Capsule

Goldfinch readers born after 1982 have never seen the state capitol without scaffolding. Follow *The Goldfinch* inside and travel back in time!



Architect Scott Allen led the way down a spiral staircase into the basement of the Iowa State Capitol in Des Moines. He was wearing a suit—but don't let that fool you into thinking Allen's work on the capitol restoration project is all design, drawing, and desk work. You might find him outside in the bucket of a crane suspended over the dome inspecting replacement windows. Or exploring secret rooms. Or crawling through void spaces between floors. Or in an archive digging for clues so that carpet, light fixtures, and paint colors may be accurately reproduced.

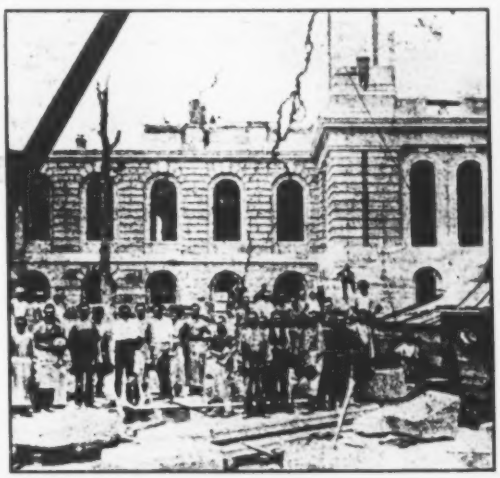
The Goldfinch followed Allen into a narrow room with stone walls. Bright lights hanging from the low ceiling illuminated a workbench and shelves lined with artifacts discovered during the renovation which help tell the building's story.

Some of the objects are only a few years old—such as the collection of cans and bottles of drinking water shipped in

1871

Workers lay the foundation for the Iowa State Capitol.

1876



Work continues on the ground level.

A Capitol Timeline

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from all over the country when the 1993 flood contaminated the Des Moines water supply. Next in line were much older artifacts: batteries that powered the capitol's first telephones.

"There are lots of air shafts throughout the building," Allen explained. When telephone batteries died, people dropped them down an open shaft.

A painter working in the "lantern"—the observation level of the main dome—found a .30 caliber spent cartridge behind a bolt securing the dome's steel stairway. Rolled up inside the cartridge, where the bullet would have been, was a piece of paper dated in the 1890s. "It was signed by a worker from Guthrie Center," said Curtis Small, project superintendent for Neumann Brothers, Inc., general contractor for the restoration project. "He probably stuck it there while putting the stairway together."

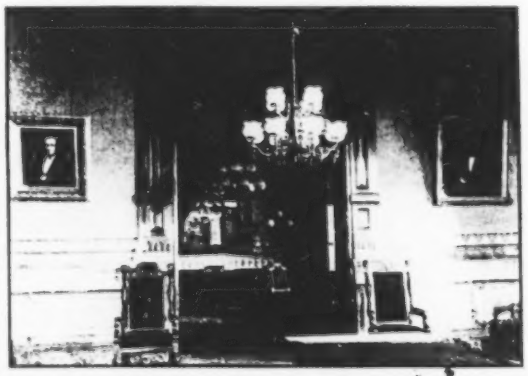
While working on the west gable arches, Carl Crees, masonry foreman for Forrest & Associates of Des Moines, found an old wooden mallet used to tap stones into place. "The handle was broken, so [workers] threw it into the arch," Crees said.

Allen demonstrated a gadget used to light the gas chandeliers originally installed in the capitol. The long-handled tool holds a wick to light the lamps and a slot that fits onto key-like knobs beneath each lamp that could be adjusted to regulate the size of the flames. The tool was found when workers cut into a steam pipe. "It was in line with the pipe, stuffed into the insulation," Allen explained. Eventually, the tool will be displayed in the law library, where fluorescent lights will be replaced by electric reproductions of the original gas fixtures.

Workers have found Indian head pennies and buffalo nickels. "Those may have accidentally fallen out of workers' pockets," Crees guessed. An architect doing survey work in a crawl space found a trowel—more than a century after another worker misplaced it.

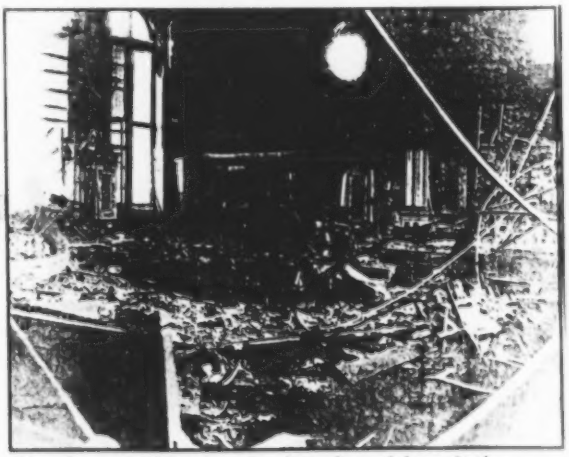
Some items discovered during restoration offer clues enabling new materials to match what was originally used in the building. "We recently found a piece of carpet under a bookcase that dated before 1895. It was probably original carpet," Allen said. While a chunk of carpet may not

1880



This 1880 photo of the Governor's office helped architects reproduce the original light fixtures during the current renovation. The Capitol was completed in 1884.

1904



Fire damaged the house chambers (above), the Supreme Court room, and first floor corridor.

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gable: a triangular wall section at the end of a slanted roof.

seem like an exciting find, it saves architects and designers working on the project hours of research.

When they don't have samples of original carpet, the architects search for historic photographs revealing details of the decor. "We can take a black and white photo, figure out about when it was taken, then go to carpet manufacturers in existence at the time," Allen explained. "They go into their archives and determine the colorways and fibers available at the time." Allen also looks for contracts describing original materials used. Research is the key to accurate restoration. "You can get hooked on projects like this!" he said.

Hundreds of old Western Union forms for sending holiday telegrams were found in the dome. In 1937, people could compose their own 15-word messages and send the telegrams anywhere in the country for 35 cents. If the sender chose a preprinted message, the telegram cost a quarter.

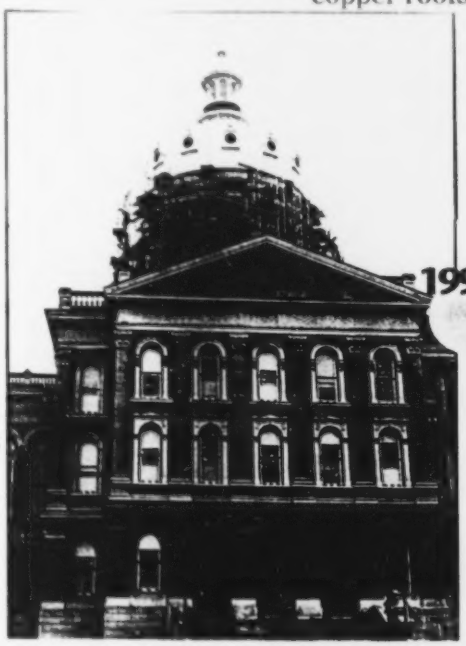
Workers also found a bundle of expired election ballots ("They were blank," Allen said), two secret rooms (so far), and a **dumbwaiter** on the senate side running behind the men's restroom to the basement (no one knows what it was used for or if it ever worked).

Painters who worked on the outside of the dome in 1884 wrote their names above the windows. "You have to be on scaffolding to see the names," Small said. In the law library, carpenters signed their names on a plaster wall before installing shelves and panelling.

Workers today are leaving their marks, too. "We put the names of people who worked on the capitol in a box inside one of the stone urns" before putting it in place, Crees said. "We often throw a quarter or a nickel into spaces before sealing them off," he continued.

Workers sign and date the backs of wooden trim pieces before nailing them in place. They've also soldered a penny on each of the four smaller domes with dates that correspond to the years the copper roofs were replaced. "The last thing Carl and I did on a scaffold in front of Liberty (the center statue on the west **gable**) was [to glue] a 1991 penny to the top of her head," Small said, grinning. GF

dumbwaiter: small elevator for carrying food or other goods.



1982

By the time renovation began in 1982, the exterior had deteriorated to the point that sandstone pieces fell from the building. Stone carvings had eroded beyond recognition.

1999

The Iowa State Capitol, 1999. Workers find cool stuff during renovation!

2001

Exterior work will be completed. Interior renovations will continue.

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Carl Crees demonstrates Lewis Pin system for lifting stone. Two holes are drilled angling from the ends toward the center. A pair of 7-inch pins is inserted, then joined with a ring and hooked to a crane. This stone weighs 3,000 pounds. The pins can lift up to 12 tons.

Carl Crees has lived in Iowa all his life, but he'd never visited the State Capitol until he went to work there as a stone **mason** in 1989. "The capitol is part of me now," Crees said. It's hard for him to imagine working anywhere else.

"I didn't realize the architecture and workmanship that was here," said Crees. Many of the exterior stone walls are six or seven feet thick. Turn-of-the century workers who built the capitol were only one-quarter of an inch off level from one end of the enormous building to the other, Crees explained. "I'm amazed at how straight and true it was," Crees said.

The two largest stones that have been replaced weighed 7 tons each—and they were placed 100 feet above the ground. "I would have liked to have seen how they placed the originals," Crees said. "We have a 70-ton crane that can reach 150 feet to get the job done." Workers in the late 1800s used steam engines, ramps, and **derricks** to place heavy stones.

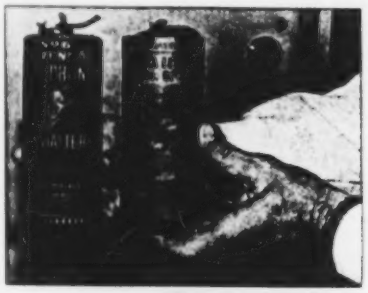
"If they would let me go back [in time] for about two months—and promise me I could come back—I'd go there [to the 1870s] to see how they did it!" Crees said.

mason: someone who builds or works with stone or brick

derrick: framework used to hoist heavy objects.

Curtis Small admits that renovating the historic Iowa State Capitol isn't all work and no play. Workers removed the five statues from the west gable, then put them on a flatbed semi so they could be transported to stone carvers in Indiana. "We put a University of Iowa scarf and hat on Liberty [the largest of the statues, standing about two and one-half times taller than an adult], then sent her east into Hoosier country," Small explained. When the new statues were shipped back, the Indiana stone carvers got even. Liberty sported Hoosier attire.

Small has been involved with the capitol restoration since 1989. "It's a challenge working on something that was built 120 years ago," he said.



Curtis Small found this hammer (above) when he opened the ceiling of a corridor on the first floor to update the sprinkler system. Marks on the head show that the hammer was manufactured between 1840 and 1892 by David Maydole of New York, who invented the method of securing the head to the handle that tool makers still use today. Batteries (above, left) found in air shafts once powered phones at the capitol.

Scott Allen and Curtis Small outside the capitol.

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Save Your History for the Future:
Create Your Own Time Capsule!

Would you like to send a little bit of yourself into the future? Try putting together your own time capsule. Choose things to put inside that have special meaning for you—things that will introduce you to people you may never meet. Consider making this a family project. As you introduce the future to members of your family, you might get to know each other a little better along the way.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Select a container that is leak proof and air tight, such as a resealable plastic bag. It's a good idea to double bag the contents. A glass canning jar with a wide mouth and a lid that screws on tightly works well, too.

2. Your container must be as full as possible to keep air out.

3. Make sure the items and the container are thoroughly dry.

4. Black and white photographs will last longer than color prints. Your photos will stay preserved better if you put acid-free tissue paper between them to keep them from sticking together.

5. Label your time capsule articles in pencil so the writing doesn't deteriorate and fade with time.

6. Making photocopies of newspaper articles on high quality paper will help the images last longer.

7. Label the outside of the time capsule clearly with a permanent marker.

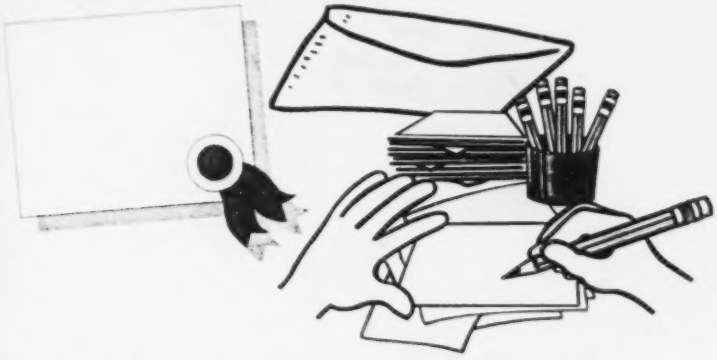
8. For added protection if you're using a canning jar, put heavy plastic over the mouth of the jar before you put on the lid. Then trim off the excess plastic and seal the edges with paraffin wax. Let the wax harden overnight before hiding or burying your time capsule.

9. Include a list explaining the contents in the time capsule. Keep a separate list of the contents in a safe place along with directions to the location where the time capsule is hidden or buried. Determine when you want the time capsule to be opened—25 years? 50? 100? Make sure that information is included with the directions.

10. Make a detailed map of where to locate the time capsule in case the landscape changes in the area where it is buried.

11. Make sure the ground is dry when and where you bury your treasures for the future. Dig a hole that is 12–18 inches deep.

12. Mark the site with a large stone or other object to indicate where the time capsule is buried. Remember—you want your time capsule to be found when the time comes, so make sure that the location is well marked and detailed directions are waiting for future treasure hunters!



Things you might want to include in your time capsule:

1. Your own predictions for the future. If you want the time capsule to be opened in 50 years, write about what you think life will be like then.

2. Your family tree.

3. Coins from the year you were born or from the year you assembled the time capsule.

4. Photos of your family, pets, and activities you enjoy.

5. Report cards and samples of school work.

6. Trading cards.

7. A copy of an award you received.

8. A picture you drew or a poem you wrote. GF

How did time capsules get their name?

Whether it's a few items placed in a cornerstone before sealing it, an elaborate vault filled with the objects of a lifetime, or a simple metal box buried in a backyard, for centuries people have been hiding stuff for people in the future to find. In 1938, "Time Capsules" became the universal label for these attempts to preserve bits of material culture for the future. The Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company (New York) put together a $7\frac{1}{2}$-foot torpedo filled with a variety of items including toys, messages from Nobel Prize winners, and light bulbs. They called it a time capsule and the name stuck. Considering the container's shape, they almost called it a "Time Bomb."

The Problems with Time Capsules:

Many time capsules, once hidden, are never found. Others don't remain sealed, allowing the contents to deteriorate.

Items selected for a time capsule may only tell part of a story. People creating time capsules choose items that reflect the parts of history they want to preserve.

Things change so rapidly that items in common use today may not be recognized in the future!

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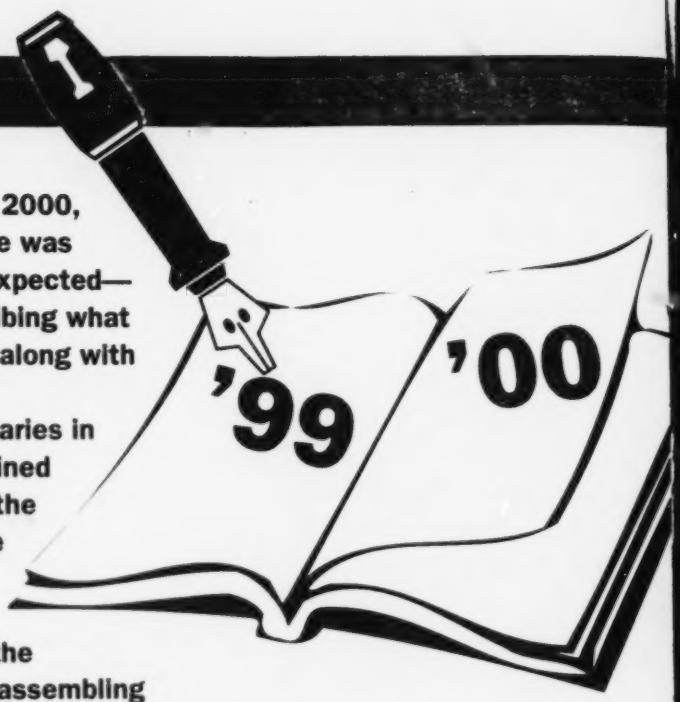
Dear Diary...



With all the attention focused on 1999 turning to 2000, *The Goldfinch* wondered if the same type of hype was present 100 years ago as 1899 turned to 1900. We expected—or at least hoped—to find detailed diary entries describing what people were thinking, feeling, and doing at that time, along with predictions for the 1900s.

In one way, our search was disappointing. Few diaries in the State Historical Society of Iowa collections contained the material we hoped to find. But at the same time, the search was intriguing because we got to see what life was like for a few Iowans who recorded their experiences a century ago.

Thomas M. Terrill, for example, probably wasn't the type of person who spent time making predictions or assembling and burying time capsules for future generations to unearth.

Terrill, a farmer from Grand Junction, Iowa, received his first diary from a friend in 1871, the year he turned 21. For the next forty-one years, he made an entry almost every day.

Monday, January 1, 1900—I went to the Jct afoot and helped invoice goods in the Farmers Store from 9 A.M. till 5 P.M. Worked with Wm. H. Smith Mostly shoes. G.M. Thomson helped too. He & I ate dinner at O.V. Blaylock. I paid 25¢ for same. Home late as I had to walk from G M's. Otis stayed from school and did the chores.

Sunday 7—At Home all day. No one here but little travel as it was quite muddy. Snow is about all gone. The folks went to Bethel U.B. Church in the Eve....Thawed and was a pleasant day. Froze hard during the night.

Monday 8—I went to Bennetts & Flairs mine and got 2250 of coal for which I paid $2.25. Rough going down but soft coming back. Lost one of my fur mittens.... S.E. wind.

20

Friday, December 21, 1900—...I hauled two loads of corn for H. Amrhine from his place to Rippey one load A.M. and one load P.M. He hauled one load too P.M. Home Late. Fine weather—good roads. S.E. wind.

Saturday 22—...I hauled and scattered 2 loads of manure A.M. Willie, Bert & I went to the Jct PM Rec'd $8.00 of John Henderson Gave the boys 50¢ 25¢ each for X presents. Rained quite hard P.M. Came home through it — colder.

"Jct" was Terrill's abbreviation for Grand Junction.

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Sunday 23—At home all day. No one here. Snow during the night. Ground would have been covered only it drifted. Strong wind from N.W. all day. Stormy. Did not turn the cattle out. Put the hogs in yard by sheds. Colder.

Tuesday 25—Ma & I went to Amrhines. Helped take up carpet. Came back for dinner. Had Rabbit and Chicken for dinner. The boys hunted and skated about all day. They got 4 or 5 rabbits. Billy Thornton came in the Eve and was here all night. He and I sat up late.

Sunday 30—At home all day. Blustery and disagreeable. It snowed a little. Strong wind from the N.W. Geo Herrick was here for dinner. They tried skating but froze out.

Monday 31—Zero. At home all day. Cold. Did not do much. Bert had the stomach ache. Not serious. Walter Tassel died this morning at 3 A.M.... Good bye old year. Bought a book for 1901...pd 75¢.

Terrill's diary suggests he is a very practical person. He recorded details of farm work, kept track of what his family earned and spent, and documented work he did away from his farm. He may not have intended to create a time capsule, but in a way, that's exactly what he did. His time capsule was "opened" in 1981 when the diaries were transcribed and published. Today they are an important resource for people studying 19th-century farm life in Iowa.

Ask yourself:

1. Terrill mentions weather conditions almost daily in his diary. Why was this so important to him?

2. Terrill mentions giving "the boys" money to buy Christmas gifts on Saturday, December 22. See if you can find a catalog from 1900. What items could the boys have purchased for gifts with the money that they received?

3. What kind of jobs did Terrill do off the farm?

Eli Mendenhall kept a diary while living in Hardin County, Iowa, at the turn of the century. He was75 when 1899 turned to 1900.

Sun., Dec. 31, 1899. Clear. 8 below. At meeting and Sunday School. Both good. Jesse Lloyd was present and preached at both morning and evening services. Both able sermons. At Endeavor meeting & evening meeting. I liked the evening meeting very much. The day has been cold. Adieu, 1899. We have buried thee.

January 1, 1900. Clear. **Ther.** 8. Hail glad new year! Bright and beautiful is thy advent. And though we write thee one thousand nine hundred and nothing, we welcome thee just the same. Bring gladness and peace on thy pinions. What thou has in store for us we may know by thy unfolding days.

"Ther." stands for "thermometer." The number that follows is the temperature measured in degrees Fahrenheit.

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Mendenhall filled every bit of space available in his small diary book for the final day of the 19th century. Here's what he wrote:

December 31, 1900. Clear. Ther. 4 below. What all have I done this busy day. Some two inches of snow last night. Had to do some going of course. Opened the sewers, letting the wash waters go freely. Ah! True it is that the year is dying to night and the 19th century as well. Adieu 1900; go quickly and join thyself to the dead years and be buried in the grave of the past. Yes, and adieu to thee, 19th century; what historic events; what progress have marked thy coming and going.

Ask yourself:

1. What do Mendenhall's diary entries have in common with Terrill's?

2. What are some differences between the two diaries?

3. A history of Hardin County tells us that Mendenhall is a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers). How is this apparent in his writing?

Lorin A. Rowe, who managed Legetts Opera House in Eddyville, Iowa, wrote this in his diary at the turn of the century:

Eddyville, Ia. Monday Dec. 31st, 1900. This is the last day of the Nineteenth Century: What wonderful changes have been wrought in the century just now at its end; nothing now seems to amaze people in general: Steam cars, steamboats, Electric lights and motors, Telegraphs, Telephones, Phonographs (Talking machines) Life-like moving pictures, etc. etc.

Ask yourself:

1. What do you think are the biggest changes in the 20th century?

2. Do you keep a diary? If someone 100 years from now reads it, what would they learn about the 20th century?

Christopher Evans, born in 1840, began keeping his day book or diary when he was 45 years old. He made periodic entries until a year before his death in 1918. Many of the one-line entries record descriptions of the weather or note the deaths of members of his family and community. Here are his "New Year" comments from 1900:

January, 1900. Rain. The year 1800 ended with war in South Africa and the new year 1900 began with a continuation of the same war — England against the Boers in Transvaal. One hundred years ago it was Napoleon who was the world's slaughterer. Now it is those who call themselves the world's light — the enlightened England as leader of those who would rule. When I today, the 9th of January, 1900, see in my mind the next 100 years then my thoughts get dizzy—but much more important—Eternity!

Ask yourself:

1. Do your thoughts "get dizzy" thinking about the next 100 years? What are your predictions for the 21st century?

22

GF

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A New Century In The News

Mr. Prat, editor of the *Iowa Falls Sentinel* works at his desk in 1900. Are you interested in the century debate? Dig into newspapers from 1899 and 1900 at your library!

The diarists we found all identified 1901 as the first year of the new, 20th century. Newspapers across the state, however, debated that fact as January 1, 1900, approached.

Frank Leverett of Denmark, Iowa, believed the 20th century started in 1900. His letter to the editor of the *Burlington Hawk-Eye* appeared on December 20, 1899:

THE CENTURY DISCUSSION

Conflicting Opinions of Correspondents and the Press

Editor Hawk-Eye: ...[Those] who think the century will not begin until January 1, 1901, are generally more dogmatic than those who think it will begin January 1, 1900....As I am inclined to favor January 1, 1900, I will venture to offer the reason for my opinion and if you think it worthy of publication I am willing to go into print as a supporter of that date....

If it be granted that there was a zero year at the beginning of the first century just as there is a zero year at the beginning of each individual life there would be a full 100 years at the close of the year 1899....

Leverett went on to argue that a bicycle cyclometer (an instrument which measures the distance traveled) registers 99 miles when the 99th mile is completed, and 100 miles when the 100th mile is completed. Therefore, he claimed, when the year is 1899, 99 years of the century are complete. When the year is 1900, a full 100 years (a century) have passed, making 1900 the "zero" year of the new century. According to his system, the very first day of the very first year would have been January 1, 0 (year zero).

J. C. Marshall of Salem, Iowa, expressed an opposing viewpoint in his letter to the *Hawk Eye*.

Ed. Hawk-Eye: If you have not already devoted too much space to the much discussed subject of the closing of the century, I would like to offer the following: When the new era was ushered in...the first date to be written would be January 1 of the year one (or January 1st, 1). This then would be the first day of the first year and not the first day after the first year....

Hence, January 1, 1900 does not indicate the beginning of the twentieth century but the beginning of the last year of the nineteenth century....

In the final weeks of 1999, similar articles appeared in newspapers debating when the 21st century (and in this case the new millennium) begins. Perhaps the best thing about the ongoing discussion: you can celebrate the dawn of the 21st century and the 2nd millennium twice! GF

dogmatic: stating beliefs in a positive, often arrogant manner.

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A Piece of History? A Goldfinch Mystery!

Not everyone agrees on when a new century begins. Some say the 21st century began on January 1, 2000. Others believe it begins January 1, 2001, and that the year 2000 is the final (the 100th) year of the 20th century and the last (or the 1000th) year of the current millennium. This debate is not new. In 1899, a similar controversy resulted in the embarrassment of one small Iowa town.

by Susanne Leibold

In the final days of 1899, Henry Barber, "long-haired and wild-eyed," walked through the streets of Lost Nation, Iowa, snapping at objects and writing the number 1900 on fences and billboards. Barber had gone insane trying to prove when the 20th century began. When police officers came to arrest him, he fought them all the way to his jail cell. Details of the incident appear in the December 29, 1899, edition of the *Cascade Pioneer* newspaper.

Could this be true? Could someone actually go insane over the question of whether the 20th century began in 1900 or 1901?

It seems Henry Barber did.

Or did he?

R.M. Gable, editor of *The Lost Nation Chronicle* in 1899, claimed the incident never happened and that Henry Barber did not exist. "We have not now, nor have we ever had any long haired wild-eyed, untamed mathematician running loose on our streets. There never was in the history of Lost Nation a man living in it by the name of Barber."

The origins of the Henry Barber story were a mystery. "Just how such a villainous story originated we have up to the present been unable to discover," Gable wrote. "That some of our best citizens have discussed the twentieth century we do not attempt to deny, but that any of our people have worked themselves up to a proper condition to become an inmate of a lunatic asylum over the matter, we say is utterly without any foundation whatever."

From the Cascade Pioneer, Dec. 29, 1899.

cality in which it is confined.

Insane Over New Century.

Henry Barber, a mathematician of prominence in Lost Nation, has become insane through constant study of the problem: "When does the twentieth century begin?" He walked about the streets snapping at various objects and marking the figures "1900" on fences and billboards. He has been locked up.

The story was picked up in Chicago and by other Iowa newspapers such as the *Monticello Express*. Was this a joke at the expense of the town of Lost Nation? Or was Henry Barber a closely guarded secret?

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The Goldfinch encountered Henry Barber by accident while searching through 100-year-old newspapers to see if writers made predictions about what they thought the 20th century would be like. Where the story originated is still a *Goldfinch* mystery. After much research, no trace of Henry Barber can be found. No birth or death certificate could be found. Nor could we find copies of the *Chicago Saturday Blade*, one of the first newspapers to carry the story. Was the crazed mathematician story merely a rumor started by a neighboring town envious of Lost Nation's recent prosperity? Was the story invented to make a point in the debate about when the 20th century began?

According to Stephen Bloom, a journalism professor at the University of Iowa, newspapers did occasionally invent stories, especially if a town had competition from a new newspaper. Inventing stories was a way to attract readers. "It is possible that the story could have been invented to prove a point about the 20th century," Bloom said. "Without knowing where the story originated, there is no way of knowing the true reasoning behind the story."

Journalists today sometimes invent stories to make a point or to attract readers. Bloom recalled an incident at *The Washington Post* in 1980 where a journalist wrote feature stories about a fictional 8-year-old heroin addict named Jimmy. When using newspaper accounts as sources in historical research, it's important to double check the facts. Sometimes even news experts can be fooled! GF

Lost Nation Chronicle.

THE CHRONICLE

NOW FOR BUSINESS!

GILROY • BROS.

• AUCTION! •

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21.

LOOK HERE!

A. E. HAAK.

How Lost Nation Got Its Name

Lost Nation is located in Clinton County. Some say Lost Nation received its name when a party of hunters saw the town from a hill and one remarked that it looked like a lost nation. Another story claims that a tribe of Indians starved and froze to death at the site upon which Lost Nation was later built. Others claim that a German man named Balm became lost while trying to locate relatives in the area. Some claim it was named Lost Nation because of the wild, inaccessible country.

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The Scheuring farmhouse and the families who have lived in it are a living time capsule of the history of agriculture in Iowa. More than 100 years have passed and many changes experienced on the farm since Joseph Scheuring purchased the property in 1897.

Making History on a Family Farm

by Katherine House

Today, Amanda, Carmen, Jennifer (front row), Cindy, Elizabeth, Tiffany, and Joe Scheuring (back row) live on the family farm near Defiance.

When the Scheuring sisters of Defiance hunt for history, they don't have to look very far. The farm where Amanda, Carmen, Jennifer, Elizabeth, and Tiffany live has been owned by their family for more than 100 years.

Great-Grandfather Joseph Scheuring purchased the property in 1897. He expanded an existing shack, then rebuilt the home after a tornado destroyed it. He added a second floor to the structure around 1900. Today, the farmhouse where the Scheurings live looks much like it did at the turn of the last century. The nearby barn was built in 1904, and a corn crib was erected in 1913.

The farm was passed on to the girls' grandfather, Austin Scheuring, who was born in 1918. His son Joe (the girls' father) farmed the property with Austin until Austin died 16 years ago. Grandma Scheuring lives in a newer home built on the farm in the early 1980s. An uncle also farms part of the 480-acre property.

As another century dawns, the girls help carry on the legacy of running the family farm. "It's part of my history living on this farm," says Jennifer, age 14. "That's why it's so important to me." Like generations of Iowa children, the girls help with chores.

"I feed the bottle calves," explains Carmen, age 12. "The one we have now was born in January [1999]." Initially, the calf had to be fed with a bottle just as many babies are. Now the calf drinks water and eats corn and hay. Nine-year-old Amanda helps her father feed the pigs, cows, and turkeys. She

PHOTOS: COURTESY THE SCHEURING FAMILY

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often fills buckets with feed stored in the barn her great-grandfather built.

When livestock accidentally escape from their pens, Jennifer and her sisters help round them up. She has also vaccinated pigs with her dad. The girls have also helped their parents butcher turkeys. Amanda recalls carrying the turkeys out of the barn before butchering. Carmen helped clean them afterwards. Although the Scheurings still raise turkeys, they hire someone else to do the butchering now.

Tending the animals remains one constant on the farm, where rapid changes have taken place this century. Jennifer is learning to drive a tractor—the workhorse of the farm—just as her father did more than 30 years ago. But Therese Scheuring, the girls' grandmother, remembers life before tractors. She grew up in the 1930s on a farm on the other side of Defiance. "I remember my dad walked behind horses to plow land, and they planted corn with horses," she said. "We did everything with horses."

Like other farm children, the Scheurings have all ridden on tractors. For Amanda, though, autumn is thrilling because she gets to ride in the combine. "I like the combine better because it's bigger and it only comes out once a year," she explained. When her grandparents were married in 1950, there was no combine on the farm, just a threshing machine. It took a crew of men to prepare the harvest back then, something one person can do today. And, when Grandma

Joseph and Susan Scheuring
Joseph bought the farm in 1897. The house has changed very little since he added the second story in 1900.

Joe and Susan with their sons, Austin and Vernon. Austin, who was born in 1918, inherited the farm.

Austin (center) with his sons, Dick and Joe, in 1952.

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Scheuring was a child, corn was picked by hand.

Because people—not machines—did more of the work long ago, farm children often did not finish high school. Austin Scheuring graduated from high school in the mid-1930s, which was a rarity at that time, according to his son. "He was very, very fortunate to finish high school," Joe Scheuring said. Joe's siblings all went to college, while he chose to stay home and help on the farm after high school graduation. He expects that all of his daughters will attend college in the 21st century.

Joe Scheruing (back left), the son of Austin and grandson of Joseph) inherited the farm from his father in 1983. He grew up on the farm with his brothers and sisters: Susan and Dick (front), and Yvonne and Stephen (back).

Technological change has made life easier inside the farmhouse, too. When the Scheuring house was built, it did not have modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing or electricity. The family was one of the first in the area to have running water and an indoor bathroom. That improvement occurred in the late 1920s or early 1930s, Mr. Scheuring said.

When his parents got married in 1950, they did not own an automatic washing machine or dryer. Grandma Scheuring recalls using an old wringer washing machine in a small building on the farm called the wash house. Wash was dried on a clothesline. She heated water on a stove in the wash house for baths and other purposes. The house's hot water heater operated by stove, which was too warm to run in the summertime. Today the Scheuring sisters use the wash house as a play house.

Not all the changes on the farm have made life easier for the Scheurings, however. Falling hog prices mean the Scheurings no longer farrow to finish hogs (raising hogs from birth until they're ready for slaughter). Instead, they feed and take care of pigs delivered by another farmer. Up until a few years ago, Mr. Scheuring rented some extra land so he could make a good living as a farmer. Rising costs made renting the extra land unaffordable, so he had to take a factory job. "I never worked 'off the farm' [before]," he said. "But things are tough." In the fall of 1999, his wife began working full-time off the farm, too.

Cindy Scheuring, the girls' mother, said, "I know we both put the effort in working off the farm so we can stay on the farm." Her husband sums up his feelings about the farm by saying, "It makes me real proud to have lived here all my life." He loves to walk in the buildings and see tools that his father and grandfather used. And, best of all, he said, "I was able to work side by side with my father every day, day in and day out." GF

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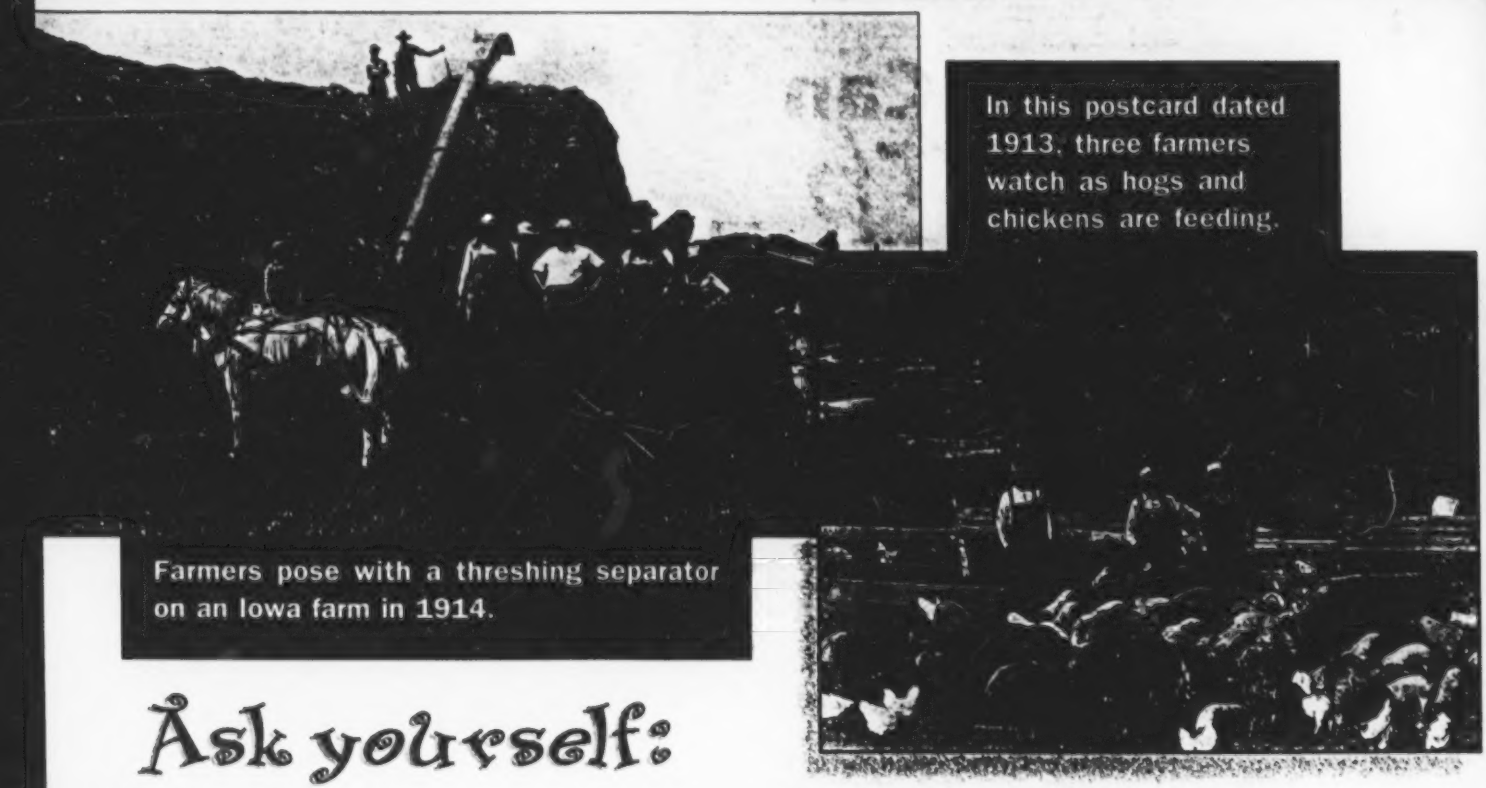
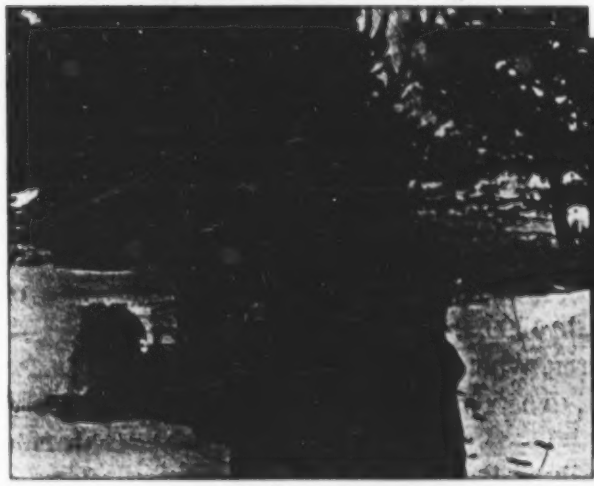


In this postcard dated 1913, three farmers watch as hogs and chickens are feeding.

Farmers pose with a threshing separator on an Iowa farm in 1914.

Ask yourself:

1. How has farming has changed in the last 100 years?
2. What are some ways kids contribute to the success of a family farm?
3. Machinery that has grown more powerful, complex, and dangerous over the last century contributes to making farming one of the nation's most dangerous industries, according to federal statistics. As many as 300 kids are killed on farms nationwide each year. Farming often depends on child labor, but it is exempt from many child-labor laws. What do you think can be done to make farms safer places for kids?
4. What are your predictions for the future of farming in Iowa?



The woman in this photo from the early 1900s is doing the laundry in a washtub out in the snow.

Turn the page to see how math and history go together to illustrate a century of change in Iowa agriculture ➤

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How Can Math Help Me Learn About History?

by Katherine House

Statistics is one tool that we can use to compare life today with life in the past. Comparing numbers from one century to another leads historians to look for reasons behind changes. For example, we know that there are fewer farms in Iowa today than there were in 1900. Historians can then look at other numbers and clues in diaries, letters, and newspapers to find out why that happened and what it means.

Solve some of these math problems to paint a picture of changes in Iowa agriculture during the last century. You may want to add a calculator to the supply of tools you're acquiring as a history detective!

1 Today, corn and soybeans are the two principal crops grown in Iowa. But soybeans weren't introduced in the state until the 1930s. At the turn of the century, oats were a very important crop. In fact, in 1900, Iowa farmers harvested 4,695,391 acres of oats. In 1999, that number had dropped to 200,000 acres. What is the difference between acres devoted to oats in 1900 and 1999?

2 Just how important were oats to Iowa farmers 100 years ago? What follows is a list of harvested acres of major crops in the state in 1900. The list is arranged alphabetically. Rearrange the list so the products are ranked by size. (Hint: the crop with the largest number of harvested acres should be at the top.) Where did oats rank?

ACRES HARVESTED IN 1900:

Barley	**627,851**	**Oats**	**4,695,391**
Corn	**9,804,076**	**Rye**	**89,172**
Hay	**4,649,378**	**Wheat**	**1,689,705**

3 Oats and hay were important because they were used to feed horses. In 1900, there were 1,391,601 horses on Iowa farms. In 1997, there were only 60,421 horses on Iowa farms. How many more horses lived on Iowa farms in 1900 than in 1997?

a) Approximately 5 times as many
b) Approximately 11 times as many
c) Approximately 23 times as many
d) Approximately 31 times as many

4 Before tractors and other machines were invented, horses supplied the power needed on Iowa farms. Machines have helped farmers become more efficient, increasing yields (the

number of bushels harvested per acre). Other technological changes were responsible for increased yields, too. In the 1930s, corn hybridization was developed. This meant that farmers could grow stronger, healthier plants. Farm chemicals also helped increase yields. In 1900, the average yield per acre for all corn in Iowa was 45 bushels. In 1999, it was 149 bushels per acre. What percentage increase is this?

5 The price of Iowa farmland has increased dramatically over time. The average value of an acre of farmland in 1997 was $1,697. The average value in 1900 was $18.07. (A large part of this change can be attributed to the changing value of the dollar.) If you had $10,000 in 1900, how many acres of land could you buy? How many acres would $10,000 buy in 1997?

6 In 1900, there were 228,622 farms in Iowa. By 1997, that number had dropped to 97,000. Although the number of farms has dropped significantly, the average size of farms has increased. The average size of an Iowa farm in 1900 was 151 acres. In 1997, it was 343 acres. Below is data showing the number of different sized farms in 1900 and 1997. How many farms were 500 acres in size or larger in 1900? What percent of the total was that? In 1997, how many farms were 500 acres or larger? What percent of the total was that?

Farm Size	Number of Farms	
	1900	1997
Less than 10 acres	5,731	5,394
10-49 acres	27,392	12,372
50-99 acres	49,665	10,578
100-259 acres	118,067	26,690
260-499 acres	24,609	19,829
500-999 acres	2,818	15,847
1,000+ acres	340	6,290
TOTAL	228,622	97,000

7 Hog production has always been important to Iowa farmers. In 1900, hogs were raised on 202,894 farms. In 1997, the number of farms with hogs had dropped to 16,440. At the same time, the number of hogs on farms increased from 9,720,179 to 14,619,552. What does this tell you about the average size of the swine herd on Iowa farms?

8 Many of today's farmers buy meat, milk, and eggs at the grocery store. In 1900, Iowa farmers were much more reliant on the land for their own food. Dairy cows were kept on 210,133 of the 228,622 farms in Iowa in 1900. What percentage does this represent? How does this compare to 1997 when only 4,496 of Iowa's 97,000 farms had dairy cows? GF

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Send your solutions to *The Goldfinch*. If your answers are correct, we'll send you a prize!

History Makers
History's Bakers!

by Jessica Myers

Jessica Myers, 13, is a member of ***The Goldfinch*** *Student Advisory Board. She's in 8th grade at Northwest Junior High School in Coralville.*

This is about hidden treaures. I decided to look into whatever treasures may lie in the recipe book of my great-great-great grandmother, Ruth Glaspell.

Ruth Glaspell was born on November 1, 1823, in Hamilton County, Ohio. She was the second youngest of seven children, several of whom died as infants. I know little of her childhood, up until she was about fifteen, when she moved to Scott County, Iowa, in what is now Davenport. Her father was James Glaspell, and her mother was Jane Stathem Glaspell. James Glaspell established a farm in what is now Fejevery Park in Davenport.

In 1848, Ruth Glaspell married Lewis Waters Burrows. As a wedding present, Lewis gave Ruth a bedroom suite which included two dressers, a bed, and other items. One of the dressers is now owned by my grandfather's sister. When taken to be refinished, this dresser was found to be pre-Civil War, because the top was made out of a single block of walnut. Walnut trees large enough to have been used for this have not been available for many years.

Ruth and her father, mother, sister, and brother-in-law were charter members of the First Christian Church in Davenport, and Ruth was a devoted church member all her life. She died on December 21, 1900.

I decided to make cookies from an old recipe of Ruth's. They are called drop cookies. I enjoyed making and eating them, and learned something about how they were made back in the 1800s. The recipe was taken from a card of her daughter's, with the notation that it was Ruth's recipe. The drop cookie recipe called for some things that you cannot buy at the store, which surprised me.

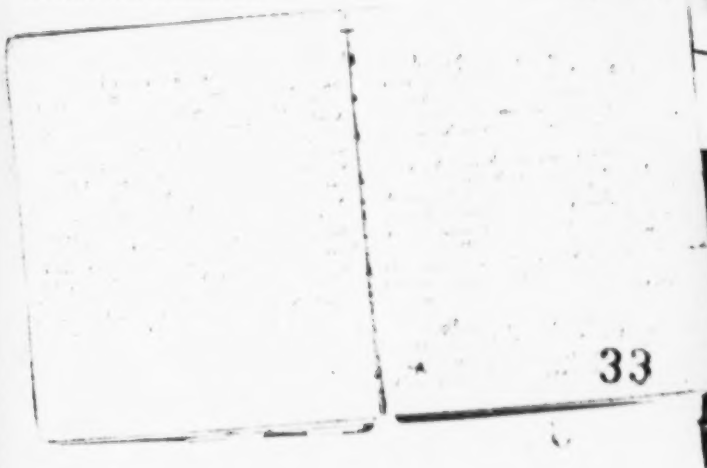
When we were ready to start, we went to buy sour milk, only to discover that you can't get sour milk at the grocery store. Instead, we bought whole milk and added lemon juice to make it curdle. The batter was fun to make and tasted good. I had some problems getting the size of the cookies right as I dropped spoonfuls onto the cookie sheet, and not all of them were round when they came out of the oven. I made about two and a half sheets of the cookies, and shared them with everyone. I am now the 7th generation in my family to have made these drop cookies.

In all, it was a wonderful experience, and I think that my great-great-great grandmother's recipe book does indeed contain hidden treasures. You just have to know where to look. GF

Ruth Glaspell in 1892

Your turn!

Taste history by trying this recipe from Jessica's family. Then see if any cookbooks have been saved through generations of *your* family. If you find something good, share it with *The Goldfinch*!



Drop Cookies

3 eggs
1 cup lard (or vegetable shortening)
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sour milk
3 teaspoons cinnamon
$\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon cloves
1 cup chopped raisins
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar
1 teaspoon salt
about 3 cups flour

Preheat oven to 375°. Mix and drop dough by the spoonful on a cookie sheet. Bake 10 to 15 minutes.

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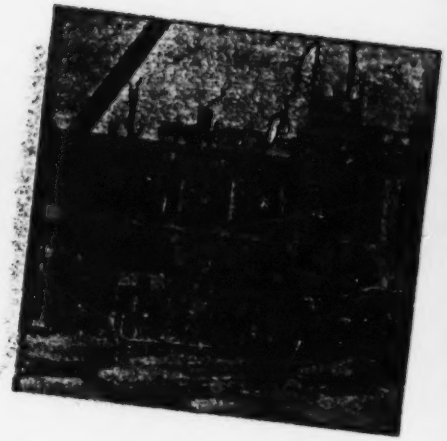
A Treasure Hunt Through History



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